

SUBJECT: <b>Code of Ethics</b>	NUMBER: 1-2.01
EFFECTIVE DATE:	REVIEW DATE:
NMMLEPSC STANDARDS: ADM.01.02	APPROVED: Sheriff

## **I. POLICY**

Ethical behavior by employees of this department is imperative in maintaining the trust and respect of the citizens within this community. Should this trust or respect ever be compromised for allegations of unethical conduct, a full scale internal investigation will be initiated and vigorously pursued. An internal investigation will serve to uncover any alleged Police practices/behavior which are considered to be undesirable or dispel any citizen speculation of its existence.

## **II. RULES AND PROCEDURES**

All sworn deputies are required to abide by the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics and understand the importance of the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics as it pertains to their role.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF ETHICS**

- A. The Valencia County Sheriff's Department has adopted the law enforcement Code of Ethics as published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. All Sworn deputies of this department shall abide by this code of ethics.
- B. A Valencia County Sheriff's Deputy acts as an official representative of government who is required and trusted to work within the law. The Deputy's powers and duties are conferred by statute. The fundamental duties of a deputy include serving the community; safeguarding lives and property; protecting the innocent; keeping the peace; and ensuring the rights of all to liberty, equality and justice.
- C. A deputy shall perform all duties impartially, without favor or affection or ill will and without regard to status, sex, race, religion, political belief or aspiration. All citizens will be treated equally with courtesy, consideration and dignity.
- D. Deputies will never allow personal feelings, animosities or friendships to influence official conduct. Laws will be enforced appropriately and courteously and, in carrying out their responsibilities, deputies will strive to obtain maximum cooperation from the public. They will conduct themselves in appearance and department in such a manner as to inspire confidence and respect for the position of public trust they hold.

- E. A deputy will use responsibly the discretion vested in the position and exercise it within the law. The principle of reasonableness will guide the deputy's determinations and the deputy will consider all surrounding circumstances in determining whether any legal action shall be taken.
- F. Consistent and wise use of discretion, based on professional policing competence, will do much to preserve good relationships and retain the confidence of the public. There can be difficulty in choosing between conflicting courses of action. It is important to remember that a timely word of advice rather than arrest – which may be correct in appropriate circumstances – can be a more effective means of achieving a desired end.
- G. A deputy will never employ unnecessary force or violence and will use only such force in the discharge of duty as is reasonable in all circumstances.
- H. Force should be used only with the greatest restraint and only after discussion, negotiation and persuasion have been found to be inappropriate or ineffective. While the use of force is occasionally unavoidable, every deputy will refrain from applying the unnecessary infliction of pain or suffering and will never engage in cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment of any person.
- I. Whatever a deputy sees, hears or learns of, which is of a confidential nature, will be kept secret unless the performance of duty or legal provision requires otherwise.
- J. Members of the public have a right to security and privacy, and information obtained about them must not be improperly divulged.
- K. A deputy will not engage in acts of corruption or bribery, nor will a deputy condone such acts by others.
- L. The public demands that the integrity of law enforcement officers be above reproach. Deputies must, therefore, avoid any conduct that might compromise integrity and thus undercut the public confidence in a law enforcement agency. Deputies will refuse to accept any gifts, presents, subscriptions, favors, gratuities or promises that could be interpreted as seeking to cause the deputy to refrain from performing official responsibilities honestly and within the law. Deputies must not receive private or special advantage from their official status. Respect from the public cannot be bought; it can only be earned and cultivated.
- M. Deputies will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.
- N. A deputy or agency may be one among many organizations that may provide law enforcement services to a jurisdiction. It is imperative that a deputy assist colleagues fully and completely with respect and consideration at all times.
- O. Deputies will be responsible for their own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve their level of knowledge and

competence. Through study and experience, a deputy can acquire the high level of knowledge and competence that is essential for the efficient and effective performance of duty. The acquisition of knowledge is a never-ending process of personal and professional development that should be pursued constantly.

- P. Deputies will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to their agency or themselves. Their character and conduct while off duty must always be exemplary, thus maintaining a position of respect in the community in which he or she serves. The deputy's personal behavior must be beyond reproach.